25 April 1969

Harold:

I gather from the length of your correspondence (4 pages!) of 23 April that you regard this important. That's good. It is so important that we cannot afford a single flaw-- everything has to be ascertained beyond doubt. For that reason I urge you to consult the best experts you can find, friends and even trusted enemies. If they are honest, I want badly to hear what they think. This case suffers because up to this point you have relied chiefly on my knowledge. This thing has to be thunped as hard as possible to see if it will stand up under pounding. I don't care who pounds it or how hard-- as long as they are honest. Now that I have put Frazier in up to his cruddy ears (and, eliptically, Hoover with him) we have to be that much more careful. Believe me, I have tried to be as critical as I can, but that is not enough. It needs a massive assault, the bigger the better. Boxers train by getting punched-- there is no other way to find the weak spots-- and it does them no good to punch themselves. So do not apologize for subjecting my work to skeptical scrutiny. I need it; I welcome it. As long as you tell me what others think, so that I can either adjust my own thinking or show them that they are wrong.

I agree to making this a package with other aspects of the Oswald frame-up. I have not seen what you have, but a package would be more impressive, make more sense.

We should talk about this face-to-face. If I possibly can, I'll try to come down and see you again. I'll presume that I can stay with you or that you will make arrangements for me to stay somewhere. I don't know when, yet, but I'll write or call as soon as I decide. I am stuck here at least until the second week in May.

For the time being, I shall continue writing a more or less self-contained article. I can adjust it later when I know how it will be published.

Saga does not appeal to me as a first shot. If this comes out as part of a book, they can have what they want from that. Reader's Digest? LIFE should be the first target-- I think that it will scare the shitless, but it is still the best. Playboy has balls, but do they have balls enough?

I tend to follow your judgment on these matters, but understand what I want. A solod hit the first time--ZANG, right in the keester, no compromize with fact. Once we are satisfied that we are right, we offer take-it-or-leave-it deals. I know that I do not have to argue with you about any of this sort of attitude, but I want you to know what I am willing to go for.

So much for publishers.

As for politicians, I cannot decide without knowing the details. Know this much, however: I would let Hoover himself save his hide if it meant getting the truth -- all the truth-- out and officially acknowledged. Even so, I would have to know the details. You can't write them, so let this aspect hang fire until we meet face to face.

I know the Commissioner that you refer to. You mentioned him when we spoke. If he cares about his place in history, he will go up with us-- otherwise he will have to go down with them. I never thought of him as dishonest, just disinterested-- at the time it might have been excusable, but not now. The only Commissioner I really blame is Warren-- Ford,too.

I must stop now. I will send this letter in pieces-- more to come-- so that you can have stuff soon. There is much to say, and I can't do it all in one sitting.

I was in touch with Shelly Braverman some time ago but I am not close. Sent him the piece on the scope-sight and got no response. I intended to tell him when all work is in, but if you

think he can be trusted and should be let in now, and if you know him, then you write to him and have him offer help to me personally. He does not know me and has not shown me interest. It should be checked by people ~~xx~~ like Braverman, but how many of them can you trust to keep quiet about it.

I'll send more of this letter soon.

Dick

BERNABEI

4/29/69

Your 4/25, in haste (a crazy, mixed-up, non-productive day with nothing but a pretty face to relieve it until 2 p.m.)

I do regard this thing as very important, not potentially but actually, in its present state. My own taste runs to the more comprehensible, which is why I focused on the clip part. And it is of such a nature that it must be done patiently. If a fair part of what we have between us does not hold up, with care we can detect and discard it, making what remains stronger. We can give up half and still have very much. Recall I suggested combining the trajectory bit with the shells? When it is done we can eng-ged the advocacy of a few good devils with the kind of knowledge required.

Of course you can stay here. If you can come in May (is school over then?), perhaps by then you will have what you want on paper and we can bird-dog. I can postpone the range tests (agreed to by the range officer who will try and break down) and the creative until then.

The greatest merit of this aspect is that it can be almost 100% graphic. This is why I bought a duplicate of the rifle, etc. That makes for comprehensibility. It also lends itself to the angle that just another assassination story.

Let the politician angle wait. It may not materialize. The Commissioner has other problems. He is not closer to remembering how we will be remembered.

I have no personal knowledge of Braverman, only rely read his article and know Garrison had apparently friendly contact.

There should be no checking until the work is finished. At that time the position of the checker may be different. The relationship with him (them) will be different, for sure.

I'll run this with the outgoing mail now and send it in the a.m.

Meanwhile, think of this: we know there was falsification of Oswald at the Sports-drome. We also know this counterfeiter picked up the casings. If he was part of the frame, he has every reason to plant. Why, then, use shells in which only the primer had been set off? One of the things this suggests, is that there was more than one frame-man. Another is that there may have been a special purpose, such as having for a defense in court irrefutable proof that those casings had not been picked up at Sportsdrome. - Have not thought it all the way through. We may not be in a position to ignore it. Also, perhaps not they used the documents, but in the subsequent errors in all of them to the Dallas investigation that there when the FBI found released some. We may know much more than I did then. I haven't time to go over it now. If you haven't recently, one of the shells. There may be more than - then understood or detected. Also been in mind that there is absolutely no evidence connecting Oswald with the rifle at the time of the murder. The only evidence connecting him with it at all is dual: the ownership testimony, which does not inspire confidence, and the palmprint, which has its own dubious history, part of which I have gone into. Some is unpublished. They could not give the FBI a second statement when they went back for it and the FBI found no evidence he had lifted the prints. It is a lift, not the print on the rifle, that exists, and there is a lifted print, which could have been made. In any event, it was old. In my own thinking, I would consider this the "Oswald" rifle, not Oswald's. That is not established.

If you give me a tentative schedule about a week in advance, I'll make the necessary arrangements.